

JULY  
2019

## WEIGHTED BLANKETS - A sleep saver?

Weighted blankets have become popular – but do you need one?

Weighted blankets are designed to feel very heavy. They are usually filled with glass or plastic pellets that add weight. Some people believe the extra weight can feel like a hug. This may have a calming effect.

Before you invest in a weighted blanket, here's what to know:

- No large studies say that weighted blankets have proven health benefits. But some smaller studies have found that they can help a person calm down when stressed. They may also help some people with insomnia and anxiety, according to the National Sleep Foundation.
- Weighted blankets come in different sizes and weights. You may wish to use one that weighs around 10 percent of your body weight.
- Never use a weighted blanket on a baby or toddler.

# Beating jet lag

Summer travel plans may take you to places across the globe. While this can be exciting, switching to a different time zone can take a toll on the body.

The body has its own internal clock that tells you when to be awake and when to sleep. This is your circadian rhythm.



## IF YOU TRAVEL TO A DIFFERENT TIME ZONE, THE CLOCK GETS DISRUPTED:

You may be awake when it's nighttime or want to sleep during the day. This can make you exhausted. Jet lag can also cause:

- Headaches
- Feeling irritable
- Trouble concentrating
- Loss of appetite
- Upset stomach
- Diarrhea

## THERE ARE SOME WAYS TO FIGHT JET LAG SO YOU CAN ENJOY YOUR TRIP:



**Stay hydrated.** Drink plenty of water before, during, and after your arrival.



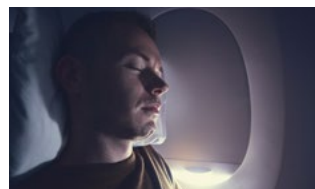
**Be careful with caffeine.** If you must have caffeine, drink it in the new time zone's morning hours. Avoid it after lunch.



**Avoid alcohol.** Some people think a nightcap will help them sleep. But alcohol actually disrupts sleep and makes you more tired.



**Get out in the sun.** When you get to your destination, go outside if it's daytime. This will help to tell your body when to be awake.



**Use your travel time wisely.** If you'll be on a plane during the "new" night time, try to rest. Use a sleep mask and ear plugs. Avoid staring at TV screens or other devices.



**Skip naps if possible.** Napping could make it harder for you to fall asleep at the correct time. If you take a nap at 6 p.m., you could be awake most of the night.

**Consider melatonin.** Melatonin is a hormone that your body makes to tell you that it's time for sleep. Taking melatonin at your new bedtime can help you sleep better. It is available over-the-counter, but ask your doctor before trying it.



# What you need to know about measles

This year, the U.S. has seen the biggest measles outbreak since 1994. Measles was declared eliminated in the year 2000, but in recent years measles has come back.

## THIS OUTBREAK IS DUE TO TWO MAIN FACTORS:

1. **Many people travel abroad.** They may travel to a place where measles is common. They catch measles there and bring it back to the U.S. with them. They may not even know they have measles until several days after they return.
2. **Some people in the U.S. do not get the measles vaccine.** If they are exposed, they get sick and can spread measles to others.



## DANGEROUSLY EASY TO CATCH

Measles is highly contagious. It spreads through the air. An infected person can simply breathe and spread measles. It can also be spread through coughing and sneezing.

You don't even have to be near a person with measles to catch it from them. Measles stays in the air for a long time. In fact, you could go into a room two hours after an infected person has left and still catch measles.

Many times, people spread measles before they even know they have it.

Almost everyone who hasn't gotten the measles vaccine will catch measles if they are exposed.

## KNOW THE SIGNS

- Very high fever (this usually comes first)
- Cough, runny nose and red eyes
- Diarrhea
- Ear infection
- Rash of tiny red spots, usually starting at the head and spreading all over

## SERIOUS COMPLICATIONS

Serious problems can happen to a person who catches measles, especially babies and young children. This includes:

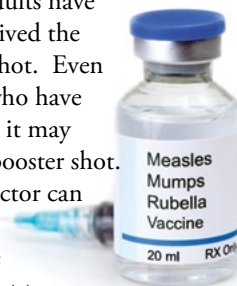
- Pneumonia (a serious lung infection)
- Brain swelling (encephalitis)
- Permanent brain damage
- Deafness
- Death

## GET THE SHOT

The best way to avoid getting measles is to get the measles vaccine. This can also keep you from spreading it to babies who are too young to get the shot.

Two doses of the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) shot are 97 percent effective in preventing measles. Children should get the first dose at 12 to 15 months of age. They get the second dose at 4 to 6 years of age.

Some adults have not received the MMR shot. Even adults who have received it may need a booster shot. Your doctor can perform a simple blood test to see if you are immune to measles.



Ask your doctor if you need the measles vaccine or if you should have the blood test done. The MMR vaccine is very safe and it works. Most health insurance covers the cost of the vaccine. If you have any concerns, discuss them with your doctor.

# Fill your grill, *but keep it healthy*



Many people like to use their grill or barbecue during the summer months. While grilling can create delicious meals, it's important to know how to avoid grilling meats the wrong way, which can increase cancer-causing substances in the food.

Substances known as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and heterocyclic amines (HCAs) can be found in meat that is cooked at high temperatures. These substances have been shown to cause cancer in laboratory animals. But the levels used in the animal studies were very high. Experts cannot say for sure how much of these substances would cause cancer in people.

PAHs and HCAs can be found in meat that has been grilled, especially if it's charred or blackened. Meat that is smoked may also contain these chemicals.

To lower these substances in grilled food, you can:

- Avoid burning or charring the food when grilling.
- Turn meat frequently when grilling to avoid burnt or very hot areas.
- Don't let the flames touch the meat directly.
- Marinate the meat first.
- Wrap meat in foil before placing it on the grill.
- Trim excess fat off of meat to avoid charring.
- Cut it up. Smaller pieces of meat will cook faster throughout. Try skewers or small pieces mixed in foil packets with vegetables.

## BEYOND MEAT

Vegetables and fruits can be delicious on the grill and they don't have the risk of PAHs or HCAs. This doesn't mean that meat-lovers have to avoid their favorite foods. Instead, have a portion of meat about the size of a deck of cards. Then fill the rest of your plate with vegetables. Red peppers, tomatoes, pineapple, peaches and asparagus are just a few of the vegetarian options that are both delicious and nutritious on the grill.



# Get grilled on safety tips



## METAL GRILL BRUSHES POSE DANGERS

If you've ever used a grill, you know that it needs to be cleaned. Many people reach for a metal wire grill brush to remove stuck-on food and debris. But this could be a dangerous mistake.

The American Medical Association says that wire grill brushes were responsible for more than 1,600 emergency room visits in just one year. These brushes have metal bristles that can break off and stick to the grill. They may be too small to see, so you don't know they're there. When you cook food on your grill, the tiny bristles can stick to the food.

If someone accidentally swallows one of these metal bristles, they can be seriously injured. The bristles can cut the inside of the mouth, throat or tonsils. This could require emergency surgery.

If you use a wire brush to clean the grill, be sure to wipe the grill off with a cloth afterward. Check the underside of the grill and lid for any bristles too.

You can also avoid using wire brushes altogether. Instead, soak the grill parts in soapy water and clean with a sponge or a paint scraper. Some people use a ball of aluminum foil to scrape the grill.



## BE SAFE WITH YOUR GRILL

- Propane (gas) and charcoal grills should only be used outside. Never use them inside a garage, barn or other building.
- Keep the grill well away from your deck railings, tree branches and house.
- Don't let children or pets near the grill.
- Open the gas grill lid before lighting it.
- Keep charcoal fluid out of reach of children and pets.
- Do not add charcoal fluid or other flammable liquids to a fire. Use it only to get the grill started.
- Let charcoal cool completely before throwing it away.



Source: National Fire Protection Association

# Exercise safely in the heat

Summer seems like an ideal time to exercise. After all, you don't have to worry about slipping on ice or wearing extra layers to keep warm.

But summer comes with its own set of safety issues. Heat illness can affect anyone, even people who are in great shape and healthy.



## WHAT IS HEAT ILLNESS?

Heat illness happens when a person's body gets too hot. This often happens when a person exercises in high temperatures.

Heat illness can be mild to severe. Sometimes it's just a sign that you need to cool off and get out of the sun. But other times, it can be dangerous or life-threatening.



## TIME TO CHILL OUT

Signs of a mild heat illness include heat rash and heat cramps. A heat rash may be red and look like pimples. Heat cramps are muscle cramps or spasms.

If you notice either of these signs when exercising, seek some shade and cool off. These are not usually serious conditions.

People who have heart conditions or who follow a low-salt diet should talk to a doctor if they notice muscle cramps or spasms with exercise. If your heat rash doesn't go away within a couple of days, see your doctor.



## WHEN THE HEAT IS AN EMERGENCY

Heat exhaustion may cause:

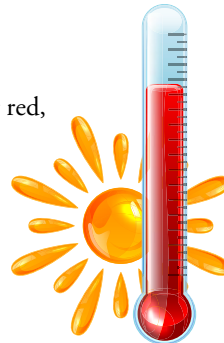
- Heavy sweating
- Cold or clammy skin
- Feeling weak
- Weak but fast pulse
- Feeling sick
- Headache
- Fainting
- Dizziness

If you notice these signs in yourself or another person, don't wait. Seek shade or go indoors. Put cool, wet cloths on the body and head or take a cool bath. Get medical help if it doesn't get better within an hour or if the person is throwing up.

## HEAT STROKE is the most severe kind of heat illness.

It may cause:

- Temperature over 103°F
- Skin that is clammy, hot or red, and even dry to the touch.
- Fast and strong pulse
- Headache or confusion
- Dizziness and/or fainting
- Feeling sick



If you suspect heat stroke, get emergency medical care. Call 911 right away. Move the person to a cooler place. Apply cool cloths to their body. Do not give them anything to drink.



# 3 “M”s

## *for giving kids an allowance*

An allowance can help children learn about responsibility. It also helps children learn about the value of money. The 3 M's of allowance will help you guide kids of all ages in the right direction.

### 1

## **MAKE YOURSELF CLEAR**

Tell them that chores should contribute to the family, not just themselves. For instance, they should do more than keep their room clean and pick up their own things. They may also do things like help with yard work, clean the bathroom sink or empty the dishwasher. Make sure they do these things well before you pay them. If they don't know how to do it, show them.

### 2

## **MODEST AMOUNTS**

Kids should use allowance for fun things, not clothes or necessities. There's no need to give them big amounts of money. Remember this is not a salary, but a way to teach kids about work. Older children should have more difficult jobs and therefore, their allowance should be larger.

### 3

## **MONITOR THEIR SPENDING**

Once they earn their money, talk with kids about spending and saving. While they should have some freedom to spend their money on something they want, help them make wise choices. They may regret their purchase later if they don't give it a lot of thought.



SUCCESS OVER  
STRESS

# Conquer job stress

## BURNOUT: WHEN STRESS GOES TOO FAR

When stress goes on for too long, a person may feel “burned out.” This usually means they become exhausted and unable to do their job well anymore. They may also become negative or feel angry toward others at work.

Burnout can seriously affect your health. It can lead to depression and possibly other problems, like heart disease and stroke.



## STOP THE CYCLE

It's not too late to manage your work stress. Even if you feel your stress is high, there are ways to make things better. Here's how:

- **Take breaks – even short ones.** Just 10 minutes of downtime during the day can make a big difference in your stress levels. Don't work through lunch and break times.
- **Practice the art of waiting and walking away.** If you feel angry or stressed about something, don't respond right away. Say something like, “let me think about that and get back to you.” Avoid sending angry emails when you feel stressed.
- **Go easy on yourself.** Are you expecting perfection from yourself? No one is perfect. Learn from mistakes and move on.
- **Discuss your concerns.** If you're having trouble with something at work, talk to your supervisor about solutions. Don't keep it bottled inside and assume it will work itself out.

Source: American Psychological Association